

**A Population Chronology of
Fairfax County**

Transparency

- c.1250 Indian tribes settle in what is now Fairfax County.
- 1608 Captain John Smith explores the upper Potomac River.
- 1742 Fairfax County established by House of Burgesses; named for William, 6th, Lord of Fairfax. Included what are today Arlington, Loudoun Counties, and the Cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, and Fairfax.
- 1749 City of Alexandria organized.
County population estimated to be less than 10,000, 28% were slaves.
- 1782** Slave population estimated to be 41% of the population.
- 1790 Estimated population is 12,000.
- 1791 Virginia General Assembly cedes a part of Fairfax County (today's Arlington County) to the national government for use as the new national capital of Washington, D.C.; returned to VA in 1847 and organized as Arlington County.
- 1800 Fairfax Courthouse established in present location; served as the governing body of the county; overworked soils causes economic decline; plantation economy ends; many slaves sold out of the area.
- 1840 Estimated population is 9,370.
- 1860 Estimated population is 11,800.

- 1870 Estimated population is 12,000.
Local government control shifts from the county court to a Board of Supervisors system; County establishes first public grammar schools.
- 1906 First high school opens; economy based on mixed agricultural production improves as northern farmers move to the county.
- 1930 Population estimated at 25,000.
- 1940 Population estimated at 40,000.
- 1950 Population 248,000, due to WW II and growth in national government employment; diversified service economy overtakes agricultural base.
- 1960 Population 248,897; migration from cities to suburbs gains momentum.
- 1971 Population is 454,275.
- 1980 Population is 596,901; economy dominated by service and government-related activity.
- 1990 Population is 818,584 (doubled in twenty years).
- 1999 Population is 948,636, economy dominated by high-tech and international companies.
- 2010 Population estimated to be 1,082,811.